

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-07 CIAE-00 INR-11

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 IO-03 SP-02 DODE-00 PM-03 DRC-01

SSO-00 INRE-00 /057 W

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O 070823Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5771

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SEOUL 5882

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, KS

SUBJECT: DETERIORATION OF JAPANESE-KOREAN RELATIONS

REF: (A) STATE 196331; (B) STATE 196332 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: MORNING SEPT 7 FONMIN KIM DONG-JO SAID JAPANESE, APPARENTLY MOTIVATED BY SEPT 6 ATTACK ON THEIR EMBASSY HERE, HAD REVERSED REPORTED WILLINGNESS TO SEND TANAKA LETTER TO PRESIDENT BY SPECIAL ENVOY. GOJ NOW INTENDED SEND APPARENTLY INADEQUATE REPLY TO PRIMIN THROUGH JAPANESE EMBASSY. HE AGAIN CITED NEED FOR SATISFACTORY JAPANESE RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT BY SPECIAL EMISSARY (BUT INDICATED SOME FLEXIBILITY IN TIMING OF THIS ACTION AND CONTENT OF LETTER) AND URGENTLY REQUESTED HIGH LEVEL USG EFFORT TO BRING THIS ABOUT. CHARGE MADE REPRESENTATION OUTLINED REF (A) FOR WHICH FONMIN GRATEFUL BUT DOUBTFUL THAT SITUATION COULD AWAIT ARRIVAL OF KIMURA AND TANAKA IN WASHINGTON. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH NOISE OF LATEST DEMONSTRATION AGAINST JAPANESE EMBASSY AS BACKGROUND, FONMIN KIM DONG-JO SAID HE HAD CALLED CHARGE IN TO INFORM HIM OF "BIG CHANGE" FOR WORSE

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IN ROK-JAPAN SITUATION, TO EXPLAIN HIS FURTHER MOVES TO

RESOLVE SITUATION, AND AGAIN TO URGE EARLY HIGH LEVEL USG EFFORT TO PREVENT FURTHER DETERIORATION. FONMIN SAID ROKG HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT GAIMUSHO HAD PREPARED LETTER WHICH TOOK INTO CONSIDERATION SUGGESTIONS HE HAD EARLIER GIVEN AMB USHIROKU. LETTER HAD BEEN APPROVED, FIRST BY KIMURA AND SELECTED GOJ CABINET MEMBERS, AND THEN BY TANAKA. ROKG ALSO UNDERSTOOD THAT GOJ WAS WILLING SEND SPECIAL EMISSARY TO CONVEY LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK. (THIS INFORMATION PRESUMABLY CAME THROUGH PRIVATE CHANNELS; FONMIN DID NOT SPECIFY SOURCE AND WE HAVE HAD NO OTHER CONFIRMATION.)

2. LATE AFTERNOON SEPT 6, HOWEVER, GAIMUSHO ASIAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR TAKASHIMA HAD CALLED IN ROK MINISTER YOON AND SHOWN HIM DRAFT OF PROPOSED GOJ LETTER. LETTER ITSELF APPEARED CLOSE TO BEING ACCEPTABLE EXCEPT FOR IMPORTANT OMISSION OF ANY REFERENCE TO JAPANESE ACTION AGAINST CHOLEN SOREN. TAKASHIMA SAID THAT HE COULD SHOW DRAFT TO YOON, BUT GOJ COULD NOT PROVIDE ADVANCE COPY FOR ROKG CONSIDERATION OR COMMENT. HOWEVER, TAKASHIMA SAID LETTER WOULD BE ADDRESSED FROM TANAKA TO KIM CHONG-PIL AND WOULD NOT BE CARRIED BY SPECIAL EMISSARY. FONMIN SAID HE COULD ONLY AScribe THIS "SHIFT" IN INTENTIONS TO JAPANESE REACTION TO ATTACK ON THEIR EMBASSY HERE.

3. FONMIN SAID HE HAD INVITED AMBASSADOR USHIROKU TO HIS RESIDENCE LATE LAST EVENING AND ADVISED USHIROKU TO GO TO TOKYO PERSONNALLY TO EXPLAIN SITUATION HERE AND TO ATTEMPT PERSUADE GOJ OF NEED TO SAVE PRESIDENT'S FACE AND "TO CONSOLE HIM AS HUMAN BEING." HE TOLD USHIROKU THAT IF LETTER NOT ADDRESSED PERSONALLY TO PRESIDENT PARK AND NOT CARRIED BY SPECIAL EMISSARY, REACTION OF HIS GOVT WOULD BE UNPREDICTABLE. IN FONMIN'S JUDGMENT, ROKG WOULD HAVE TO RECALL ITS AMBASSADOR FROM TOKYO AND ISSUE STRONG STATEMENT CRITICIZING JAPANESE FOR INSINCERITY. AMBASSADOR COULD NOT RETURN UNTIL JAPAN HAD APOLOGIZED FOR THIS SLIGHT AND HAD AGREED SEND SPECIAL EMISSARY WITH APPROPRIATE LETTER. THIS WOULD PUT GOJ IN EVEN MORE DIFFICULT POSITION AND, LACKING ANY RESPONSE, ROKG WOULD EVENTUALLY BE COMPELLED TO

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TAKE "DRASTIC ACTION." FONMIN SAID USHIROKU AGREED TO ASK GOJ CONSIDER POSSIBILITY OF CALLING HIM HOME FOR CONSULTATION.

4. FONMIN THEN PROVIDED COPY OF SUGGESTED DRAFT OF MESSAGE FROM PRIMIN TANAKA TO PRESIDENT PARK WHICH HE HAD GIVEN USHIROKU SEPT 5 (BEING SENT SEPTEL). HE SAID ROKG WOULD NOT REQUIRE THIS PRECISE WORDING BUT FELT GOJ

RESPONSE SHOULD COVER ALL PRINCIPLES IT OUTLINED IN FORTHCOMING AND CONCILIATORY WAY. HE RECOGNIZED THAT GOJ WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH INCLUSION OF STATEMENT OF INTENT TO "ENFORCE, AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT EXISTING LAWS AND REGULATIONS" WITH RESPECT TO CONTROL OF CHOSEN SOREN, AND SAID SUCH REFERENCES COULD BE OMITTED. SPECIAL EMISSARY, HOWEVER, SHOULD BE PREPARED ORALLY TO CONVEY TO PRESIDENT PARK ADEQUATE ASSURANCES OF JAPANESE INTENTIONS.

5. FONMIN SAID THAT ROKG WOULD ALSO BE WILLING TO WAIT FOR EMISSARY UNTIL SHORTLY AFTER TANAKA HAD LEFT JAPAN, RECOGNIZING TANAKA WOULD WISH TO BE SPARED ORDEAL OF DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH CRITICS IF ACTION TAKEN BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE, BUT THAT ROKG MUST HAVE ASSURANCES THAT TANAKA WILL IN FACT SEND EMISSARY.

6. FONMIN SAID THAT ON MORNING SEPT 6 HE HAD INSTRUCTED ROK AMBASSADOR TOKYO TO APPROACH GOJ AT HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL TO EMPHASIZE MUCH GREATER SERIOUSNESS OF AUGUST 15 ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT AS COMPARED TO SEPT 6 BREAK-IN AT JAPANESE EMBASSY. AMBASSADOR COULD SAY THAT ALTHOUGH ROKG HAD ALREADY MADE PUBLIC APOLOGY IT WOULD BE WILLING TO DO SO AGAIN IN ANY FORM JAPANESE WISHED IF THIS WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR GOJ TO SEND SPECIAL EMISSARY WITH LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK.

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5772

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO NIACT IMMEDIATE

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7. CHARGE THEN MADE PRESENTATION OUTLINED REF (A),
INCLUDING REFERENCE TO USG WILLINGNESS, IN RESPONSE TO
ROKG REQUEST, TO DISCUSS ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS WITH KIMURA
AND TANAKA DURING THEIR WASHINGTON VISITS. IN URGING
RESTRAINT, CHARGE ADDED PERSONAL CONCERN ABOUT EMOTIONAL
ATMOSPHERE AND REMARKS BY INDIVIDUAL KOREANS THREATENING
BODILY HARM TO JAPANESE IN ROK. HE SUGGESTED THAT ROKG
REACT AS CALMLY AS POSSIBLE TO ANY PRESS REPORTS OF
FURTHER GOJ STATEMENTS, SINCE POLITICAL OPPOSITION IN
JAPAN WOULD BE PRESSING GOJ HARD AND PRESS WOULD INEVITABLY
DISTORT WHATEVER GOJ OFFICIALS HAD TO SAY. HE URGED THAT
ROKG DO ALL IN ITS POWER TO CONTAIN DEMONSTRATIONS AND
TO MINIMIZE THEIR FREQUENCY, SINCE MOB PSYCHOLOGY COULD
EASILY GET OUT OF HAND AND HIGH EMOTIONAL ATMOSPHERE
MIGHT JUST INSPIRE ACTS BY INDIVIDUAL KOREANS. CHARGE
ALSO INFORMED FONMIN THAT APPOINTMENT FOR HIM WITH
SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD BEEN ARRANGED FOR NOON SEPT 13
(REF B).

8. FONMIN SAID HE APPRECIATED INTEREST OF USG BUT FEARED
THAT DISCUSSIONS WITH KIMURA AND TANAKA WOULD COME TOO
LATE. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT SECRETARY COULD CALL IN
JAPANESE AMBASSADOR FOR THIS KIND OF DISCUSSION, FOLLOW-
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ING WHICH FONMIN MIGHT BE ABLE TO ADVANCE SITUATION FURTHER
TOWARD SOLUTION BY CALL ON KIMURA OR TANAKA ENROUTE TO
WASHINGTON. HE SUGGESTED HE MIGHT LEAVE SEOUL SEPT 10
FOR THIS PURPOSE. HE AGAIN STRESSED NEED FOR AGREEMENT
ON DESPATCH OF JAPANESE EMISSARY BEFORE TANAKA'S
DEPARTURE IN ORDER TO SAVE PRESIDENT'S FACE.

9. CHARGE ASKED WHETHER THERE ANYTHING ABOUT PRESIDENT'S
MEETING WITH PRIMIN TANAKA ON OCCASION MADAME PARK'S
FUNERAL WHICH WOULD SHED LIGHT ON REPORTED DEPTH OF
PRESIDENT'S FEELINGS. FONMIN, WHO HAD BEEN PRESENT,
SAID THAT PRESIDENT HAD FELT INSULTED BY TANAKA'S
DEMEANOR. TANAKA HAD EXPRESSED CONDOLENCES FOR DEATH
OF MADAME PARK BUT NO WORD OF REGRET FOR FACT THAT
ASSASSIN HAD COME FROM JAPAN. THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION,
HE HAD USED FAMILIAR RATHER THAN HONORIFIC FORMS IN
ADDRESSING PRESIDENT AND HAD CONSTANTLY FANNED HIMSELF IN
IRRITATING MANNER. (CHARGE REMINDED FONMIN THAT TANAKA REPORTEDLY
SUFFERS FROM GLANDULAR PROBLEM WHICH CAUSES HIM TO
PERSPIRE PROFUSELY AND ABOUT WHICH HE IS REPORTEDLY
EMBARRASSED.)

10. COMMENT: ROKG HAS OBVIOUSLY BEEN PLACED ON DEFENSIVE BY REALIZATION THAT ATTACK ON JAPANESE EMBASSY HAS WEAKENED THEIR BARGAINING POSITION AND MADE IT EVEN HARDER FOR TANAKA TO MAKE KIND OF GESTURE THEY DESIRE. FONMIN'S PRESENTATION INDICATES GREATER FLEXIBILITY WITH RESPECT CONTENT AND TIMING OF JAPANESE RESPONSE, BUT CONTINUING EMPHASIS ON DELIVERY OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK BY SPECIAL EMISSARY GOES TO HEART OF PROBLEM. PRESIDENT'S DEEP EMOTIONAL REACTION TO FACT THAT ASSASSIN CAME FROM JAPAN CAUSED HIM TO INJECT HIMSELF PERSONALLY INTO THIS SITUATION. FONMIN AND OTHER SENIOR ROKG OFFICERS ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT PRESIDENT PARK WILL REACT EMOTIONALLY AND DRASTICALLY TO ANY JAPANESE RESPONSE THAT HE FEELS IS DemeANING.

11. WE WILL CONTINUE TO CAUTION SENIOR ROK OFFICIALS AGAINST ANY PRECIPITOUS MOVE. AT SAME TIME BELIEVE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN WORKING OUT OF CURRENT IMPASSE IS CLEAR SIGNAL FROM JAPANESE BEFORE TANAKA DEPARTURE THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE BACK ON TRACK

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AND THAT THEY UNDERSTAND PROBLEM CREATED BY PRESIDENT'S SENSITIVITIES.

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